



## CHECKLIST FOR STARTING A BUSINESS IN LOUDOUN COUNTY

### Disclaimer

The information contained in this guide was compiled from numerous sources by the Loudoun County Department of Economic Development. Every effort was made to ensure that the information is accurate and up to date.

While this guide offers a comprehensive compilation of tips and contacts, it is not intended to be a sole-source resource. Additional references are available at your local libraries and bookstores.

If you have any questions, want to report a discrepancy in the content, or have suggestions for making this guide more useful, please contact the Loudoun County Department of Economic Development at (703) 777-0426.

A publication by:  
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[www.loudoun.gov/business](http://www.loudoun.gov/business)

We're glad you are considering Loudoun County as your business location. This checklist is designed as a companion to the *Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County*, available as a free download at [www.loudoun.gov/business](http://www.loudoun.gov/business).

While this checklist should help you navigate the process of starting your own business, every business is unique and may require additional steps not included on this checklist.

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## CHECKLIST

### Initial Considerations

**Making the decision to start a business requires that you determine whether you have the skills, knowledge, and commitment to operate it successfully. There are many resources available to help you assure that you know what it takes to succeed.**

- ☐ **Obtain a copy of the *Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County, Annual Growth Summary*, and other information from the Loudoun County Department of Economic Development (DED).**

✎ Download Site: <http://www.loudoun.gov/business/guide.htm>

✎ Loudoun County DED Physical Location:

1 Harrison Street, SE, 5th Floor  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
703-777-0426, 800-LOUDOUN

✎ Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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- ☐ **Obtain additional guides for starting a business.**

✎ *Guide for Establishing a Business* by Virginia Economic Development Partnership

Download Site: <http://www.yesvirginia.org/pdf/guides/Est.a.bus.pdf>

✎ *Small Business Startup Guide* by the Small Business Administrations

Download Site: [http://www.sba.gov/starting\\_business/startup/guide.html](http://www.sba.gov/starting_business/startup/guide.html)

**A business plan describes the nature of your business, outlines its financial goals, and demonstrates how you intend to achieve those goals. Creating a business plan requires you to think through every detail of your business.**

- ☐ **Develop a business plan.**

✎ *Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* - Step 2

✎ Best place to receive assistance:

Loudoun County Small Business Development Center  
21145 Whitfield Place, Suite 104, Sterling, VA 20165  
703-430-7222 <http://www.loudounsdbc.org>

✎ Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

✎ Upcoming Seminars: \_\_\_\_\_

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**One of the leading reasons for small business failure is inadequate start-up capital. When you developed your business plan, you should have determined how much capital you need to start-up and fund your business.**

☐ **Determine options for financing.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* - Step 3

Prerequisite: Business Plan (Financial Analysis)

Know answers to these questions before asking for assistance:

- ? How much money will you need?
- ? Over what period of time will you require funding—initial start-up, 3 mo., 6 mo., year?
- ? Would you need additional money beyond financing that you can obtain personally?
- ? What money is needed for: daily operation, office space, equipment needs, working capital, marketing costs, professional fees?
- ? What type of business do you plan to start, and in what industry classification?

Best place to receive assistance:

Loudoun County Small Business Development Center  
21145 Whitfield Place, Suite 104, Sterling, VA 20165  
703-430-7222      <http://www.loudounsbdc.org>

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Suggested Funding Leads to Investigate: \_\_\_\_\_

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Follow Up Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## CHECKLIST

### Locating Your Business

**It's all about location, location, location. Where you establish your business is as important as the goods and services you deliver. Once you have chosen Loudoun County as a place for your business and you have a specific site in mind, follow the applicable steps on pages 5 through 7 to ensure it is the best location for your use.**

#### ☐ Select your business location.

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* - Step 1 and Step 5

Know answers to these questions before asking for assistance:

- ? Is working at your place of residence preferred?
- ? Will you lease existing space, buy an existing building, or build your own building?
- ? Will you lease or buy land to build on?
- ? Define use – Will clients/customers be visiting your place of work? By appointment? What is the flow of clients/customers? Hours of operation? Storage requirements? Truck access?

Check zoning of the potential business location online using the County's WebLOGIS system:

<http://gisinter1.loudoun.gov/weblogis/>

Zoning District: \_\_\_\_\_

Learn what is permitted in your zoning district. Locate your zoning district in the *Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance* in the table of contents, then review the appropriate section:

[http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/b&d/docs/1993zoningordin\\_2/index.htm](http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/b&d/docs/1993zoningordin_2/index.htm)

Caveat: If located in the Route 28 Tax District, the site may not be covered by the *Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance*. Some parcels continued in the zoning districts of the *1993 Zoning Ordinance* or the *1972 Zoning Ordinance*, both available for download:

[http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/b&d/docs/1993zoningordin\\_1/index.htm](http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/b&d/docs/1993zoningordin_1/index.htm)

[http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/b&d/docs/1972ordinance\\_/index.htm](http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/b&d/docs/1972ordinance_/index.htm)

If your business location is within an incorporated town, work with the appropriate town government to understand the zoning and obtain permits. For point of contact information, refer to Quick Reference Guide in the *Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* for phone number listing for each town.

If location is not within an incorporated town, contact:

Loudoun County Department of Building and Development

703-777-0397

<http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d>

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Direct Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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## CHECKLIST

### Working in Your Residence

The **Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance** allows certain businesses and occupations to be conducted in a dwelling unit, as long as the business complies with specified restrictions. Be sure to check with your Home Owners Association for any covenants that may place additional restrictions on operating a business out of your home.

☐ **Determine if your business can be operated from your place of residence.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* - Step 1 and Step 5

Important things to determine about location. Discuss these items with landowner/owner, do your own research using WebLOGIS and the Zoning Ordinance as outlined on page 4, and/or consult Loudoun County Department Building and Development:  
? What is current zoning of the building?

If your home is located in a neighborhood with a Home Owners Association (HOA), obtain a copy of your covenants and review.

HOA Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Best place to receive assistance:

Loudoun County Department of Building and Development

703-777-0220

<http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d/permits.htm>

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **Obtain Zoning Application for a Home Occupation Permit from the Loudoun County Department of Building and Development.**

Download a zoning application for a home occupation permit:  
[http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/b&d/docs/permitguideline\\_/index.htm](http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/b&d/docs/permitguideline_/index.htm)

Fee Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted application: \_\_\_\_\_

Permit Received: \_\_\_\_\_

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## CHECKLIST

### Working in Commercial Space

Loudoun County does not own any buildings that can be leased to private businesses, nor can staff participate in lease negotiations for businesses. However, the Department of Economic Development accesses a commercial real estate database, CoStar, providing a list of available space, contact information, and lease terms for space available in the County. For additional assistance, you may want to work with a commercial broker.

#### ☐ Identify existing non-residential space available for lease.

Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County - Step 1 and Step 5

Best place to receive assistance for locating potential sites:  
Loudoun County Department of Economic Development  
703-777-0426  
<http://www.loudoun.gov/business>

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### ☐ Collect information about a building to lease.

Landlord/Broker Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Landlord/Broker Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Important things to determine about location - discuss these items with landowner/broker, do your own research using WebLOGIS and the Zoning Ordinance as outlined on page 4, and/or consult Loudoun County Department Building and Development:

? What is current zoning of the building?

? What zoning ordinance has authority—Revised 1993, 1993, or 1972?

? What is current use of building?

? If use is other than current use, is the use considered “by right” or by Special Exception (refer to page 9)?

? Are there proffers associated with the parcel/building?

? Are alterations required for the building?

Best place to receive assistance for issues on zoning and allowed uses:  
Loudoun County Department of Building and Development  
703-777-0220  
<http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d/zoning.htm>

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### ☐ If there is any question as to whether or not your prospective use will be allowed in the site selected, submit a letter requesting a zoning determination of your use in the building to Loudoun County Zoning Administrator.

Date zoning determination request submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Zoning Determination: \_\_\_\_\_

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## CHECKLIST

### Selecting Lot to Build On

**Loudoun County does not own any land available for sale to private businesses. The Loudoun County Department of Economic Development maintains a database of office- and industrial-zoned land with contact information. You should also work with a commercial broker.**

☐ **Identify a non-residential parcel to build on.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* - Step 1 and Step 5

Best place to receive assistance for locating potential sites:  
Loudoun County Department of Economic Development  
703-777-0426  
<http://www.loudoun.gov/business>

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **Contact Landlord/Representative of the land.**

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Important things to determine about location - discuss these items with landowner/representative, do your own research using WebLOGIS and the Zoning Ordinance as outlined on page 4, and/or consult Loudoun County Department Building and Development:

? What is current zoning of the parcel?

? Is the prospective use allowed by right, or will a Special Exception be required (refer to page 9)?

? Are there proffers associated with the parcel?

Best place for assistance regarding zoning, acceptable uses, and proffers:  
Loudoun County Department of Building and Development  
703-777-0220  
<http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d/zoning.htm>

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **If there is any question as to whether or not your prospective use will be allowed on the site selected, submit a letter to Loudoun County Zoning Administrator requesting a zoning determination of your use on the land.**

Date zoning determination request submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Zoning Determination: \_\_\_\_\_

**Guidelines to the development process are beyond the scope of this document. Note that before beginning construction in Loudoun County, you must obtain permits from the various county agencies and, if applicable, the appropriate agencies of the incorporated towns. Most of the permits necessary are listed on the Loudoun County Department of Building and Development website, [www.loudoun.gov/b&d/building.htm](http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d/building.htm). Staff in the Department of Economic Development can serve as ombudsman in the development process as necessary.**



## CHECKLIST

### Temporary Use Permit

Loudoun has become a popular venue for a variety of special events. Businesses hosting functions with an expected attendance of more than 100 people, or those providing temporary sales, must receive a temporary use permit from the Loudoun County Department of Building and Development.

☐ **Determine if you require a Temporary Use Permit. (Applicable for temporary sales or special events with more than 100 visitors.)**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County - Step 5*

Learn what constitutes the requirement for a Temporary Use Permit in the *Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance*:

[http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/b&d/docs/1993zoningordin\\_2/index.htm](http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/b&d/docs/1993zoningordin_2/index.htm)

Then, select *Article 5*, then select *5-500*

Important things to determine about location:

? Current zoning of the parcel.

? If an event, does current zoning permit events by-right?

Best place to receive assistance:

Loudoun County Department of Building and Development

703-777-0220

<http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d/>

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ **Submit an application for Temporary Use Permit.**

Obtain a Temporary Use Application:

Loudoun County Department of Building and Development:

1 Harrison Street, Leesburg Virginia

703-777-0220

Date application submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Date granted: \_\_\_\_\_

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## CHECKLIST

### Special Exception

A Special Exception (SPEX) use is one which is not permitted by right, but which may be permitted after assessing and addressing potential impacts. The Zoning Ordinance lists, by zoning district, those uses which can be allowed by right or by Special Exception. Only uses contained in these lists will be considered in each zoning district. To determine whether the proposed use requires a Special Exception within the district, contact the Zoning Administrator in the Department of Building and Development. The purpose of the Special Exception application review process is to allow the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors an opportunity to review such requests, identify issues and impose appropriate conditions to avoid, minimize or mitigate the potential impacts.

☐ **Determine if a SPEX is required.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County - Step 5*

If you have not already done so, follow the guidelines on page 4 to determine the zoning, then follow the guidelines on pages 6 or 7 on submitting a zoning determination letter.

☐ **Request a pre-application conference with the Department of Planning.**

Obtain a Conference Request Form

[http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/planning/docs/documentsandfor\\_/index.htm](http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/planning/docs/documentsandfor_/index.htm)

Date application submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of conference: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **Complete and file a Special Exception application.**

Obtain a Special Exception application and checklist of minimum requirements

[http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/planning/docs/documentsandfor\\_/index.htm](http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/planning/docs/documentsandfor_/index.htm)

An application fee is required, and the amount is derived according to the category of use. Contact Building and Development for assistance on use, if necessary.

Fee Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Submit completed application and associated fee:

Department of Building and Development  
1 Harrison Street, Second Floor, Leesburg, VA  
703-777-0220

**Upon acceptance of your application, you will be assigned a project manager in the Department of Planning. The State mandated time line for the review of a Special Exception application is 90 days.**

Date Special Exception application accepted: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Manager Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Planning Commission Public Hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Board of Supervisors Public Hearing: \_\_\_\_\_



**Depending on your business type, you have to obtain various registrations and licenses.**

☐ **Obtain a copy of the Virginia Business Registration Guide.**

- ✎ Download from Virginia Department of Taxation:  
[http://www.tax.virginia.gov/web\\_pdfs/busForms/brg02.pdf](http://www.tax.virginia.gov/web_pdfs/busForms/brg02.pdf)

Notes

**The first step includes determining your legal structure which will affect your company's taxation, liability, and management decision-making structure.**

☐ **Determine your legal structure.**

- ✎ *Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County - Step 4*
- ✎ Know answers to these questions before asking for assistance:
  - ? Will you be working alone, or hiring employees?
  - ? Will you have partners (financing or other)?
- ✎ Download SBA's *Selecting the Legal Structure for Your Business*:  
<http://www.sba.gov/library/pubs/mp-25.pdf>
- ✎ Best places to receive assistance:
  - Loudoun Small Business Development Center  
703-430-7222  
<http://www.loudounsbdcc.org>
  - SCORE Counselors of America  
800-634-0245  
<http://www.score.org>

✎ Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

✎ Legal Structure Options:

- ? Sole Proprietorship
- ? Sole Proprietorship (under assumed/fictitious name)
- ? General Partnership
- ? Limited Partnership
- ? Corporation
- ? Limited Liability Corporation

Notes



**A new business incorporating in Virginia must file its articles of incorporation with the Virginia Corporation Commission as well as register with the local Clerk of Circuit Court.**

☐ **Register with Loudoun County Clerk of Circuit Court.**

Prerequisite: Selection of Legal Structure

Loudoun County Clerk of Circuit Court

18 E. Market Street

Leesburg, VA 20176

703-777-0270

<http://www.loudoun.gov/clerk>

Obtain appropriate forms from:

[http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/clerk/docs/forms\\_/index.htm](http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/clerk/docs/forms_/index.htm)

Fee Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Mailed/Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ **Register with Virginia State Corporation Commission, Office of the Clerk.**

Prerequisite: Selection of Legal Structure

Virginia State Corporation Commission, Office of the Clerk

Toll Free 866-722-2551

804-371-9733

Download Form from:

<http://www.scc.virginia.gov/division/clk/corp.htm>

Fee Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Mailed/Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes



## CHECKLIST

### Registering Your Business III

**All employers, corporations, and partnerships must obtain a federal employer identification number which identifies the business' tax accounts on all federal and state tax forms.**

☐ **Obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Tax ID Number.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* - Step 6

Prerequisite: Selection of legal structure, business location, first date expected to pay wages, highest number of employees expected in next 12 months.

You may apply for your EIN by phone, by fax, by mail, or online.

Internal Revenue Service

Business and Specialty Tax Line

800-829-4933

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small>

Date Mailed/Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

EIN Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

**Companies doing business in Virginia must register for a state taxpayer identification number for use when filing applicable taxes.**

☐ **Obtain a Virginia state taxpayer identification number.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* - Step 6

Prerequisite: Federal Employer Identification Number

Best place to receive assistance:

Virginia Department of Taxation

Office of Customer Services

804-367-8037

<http://www.tax.virginia.gov>

Register online or by mail:

Online: <http://www.ireg.tax.virginia.gov>

Download Form R-1: [http://www.tax.virginia.gov/web\\_pdfs/busforms/fr199.pdf](http://www.tax.virginia.gov/web_pdfs/busforms/fr199.pdf)

Note: When registering online, can also obtain a Virginia Employment Commission account number. This form also determines what taxes you are liable for.

Date Form Submitted/Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Certificate of Registration Received: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Registering Your Business IV

Virginia and the federal government both require employers to pay an unemployment tax based on an employee's salary. Businesses with at least one employee must pay unemployment tax. If you registered online for your Virginia State Taxpayer ID, then you may have also obtained your Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) account number.

#### ☐ Determine if you will be liable for Unemployment Tax.

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County - Step 7*

Additional reference: VEC *Employer Handbook*

Download site: <http://www.vec.virginia.gov/pdf/emphandbook.pdf>

Best place to receive assistance:

Virginia Employment Commission

703-803-0000 (Fairfax Field Office); 804-786-1485

<http://www.vec.virginia.gov>

The current version of the VEC *Report to Determine Liability for State Unemployment Tax* (Form VEC-FC-27) can be downloaded from:

[http://www.vec.virginia.gov/pdf/fc\\_27new.pdf](http://www.vec.virginia.gov/pdf/fc_27new.pdf)

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

VEC Account Number Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

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## CHECKLIST

### Registering Your Business V

**Loudoun County and its towns assess Business, Professional, and Occupational License (BPOL) taxes on gross receipts generated from business activity.**

☐ **Register for a Loudoun County Business License by submitting a completed Business Tax Declaration.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* - Step 6

If business location is within an incorporated town, work with the appropriate town government to understand the zoning and obtain permits. Point of Contact information (refer to the Quick Reference Guide in the *Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* for phone number listing for each town).

If location is not within one of the towns, contact the following:

Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue

703-777-0260

<http://www.loudoun.gov/cor/bpol.htm>

Prerequisite: Trade Name registration; proof of registration with state corporation commission, state license, federal employer ID number.

Must obtain within 30 days of **initiating** business activity.

Fee Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

BPOL Received: \_\_\_\_\_

**Regardless of whether or not you have a business license, all businesses in Loudoun County must pay taxes on tangible personal property.**

☐ **Register tangible property tax.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* - Step 6

If business location is within an incorporated town, work with the appropriate town government to understand the zoning and obtain permits. Point of Contact information (refer to the Quick Reference Guide in the *Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* for phone number listing for each town).

If location is not within one of the towns, contact the following:

Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue

703-777-0260


<http://www.loudoun.gov/cor/tangible.htm>


Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_




**Some business activities have additional county and state regulations for reasons of public health, safety, and welfare.**

☐ **Obtain other applicable licenses and permits.**

 *Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* - Part 6

 The Virginia *License and Permit Guide* lists points of contact with specific agencies that may require additional licenses and permits. It is available as a download from the Virginia Department of Business Assistance:  
<http://www.dba.state.va.us/licenses/>

 Best place to receive assistance:  
Virginia Department of Business Assistance  
804-371-0438  
866-248-8814  
<http://www.dba.state.va.us>

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**Even if you hire an accountant for assistance, it is a good idea to gain a basic understanding of your responsibilities regarding taxes.**

☐ **Obtain small business tax information.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County* - Step 6

Best place to receive assistance:

Internal Revenue Service

703-756-6663; 800-829-4933

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small>

U.S. Small Business Administration

800-827-5722

<http://www.sba.gov>

The following reference materials are available as free downloads:

? Small Business Tax Workshop Student Workbook

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1066.pdf>

? Starting a Business and Keeping Records

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p583.pdf>

? Tax Withholding and Estimated Taxes

<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p505>

? Employers Tax Guide (Publication 15)

[http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15\\_04.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15_04.pdf)

? Employers Supplemental Tax Guide (Publication 15A)

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15a.pdf>

? Guide to Local Taxes on Businesses

[http://www.yesvirginia.org/pdf/guides/local\\_taxes2.pdf](http://www.yesvirginia.org/pdf/guides/local_taxes2.pdf)

Notes





**Without business insurance, you at risk to lose your entire business. In making decisions about business insurance, consider the various types of protection available, services and coverage offered by competing insurance providers, and cost, among other factors.**

☐ **Obtain applicable business insurance.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County - Step 6*

Reference material:

Small Business Insurance and Risk Management Guide  
<http://www.sba.gov/library/pubs/mp-28.pdf>

Insurance Information Institute  
<http://www.iii.org>

Notes

**Some forms of insurance are required by law. Workers' compensation is mandatory for companies with three or more employees.**

☐ **Arrange for Workers' Compensation Insurance.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County - Step 6*

Best place to receive assistance:

Virginia Workers Compensation Commission  
877-664-2566; 703-207-7152 (Fairfax Regional Office)  
[http://www.vwc.state.va.us/employers\\_guide.htm](http://www.vwc.state.va.us/employers_guide.htm)

Notes



**When the time comes to hire employees know that you will have to comply with a number of legal requirements. Learn about the state and federal forms and tax filing procedures that apply and be prepared to keep highly accurate records.**

☐ **Understand laws regarding employees.**

The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry has information on Labor and Employment Law

[http://www.dli.state.va.us/whatwedo/labor\\_law/lla\\_p2.html](http://www.dli.state.va.us/whatwedo/labor_law/lla_p2.html)

Notes

**As an employer, the law requires you to withhold federal and state income taxes, as well as Medicare and Social Security (FICA) taxes, from each of your employee's earnings.**

☐ **Learn about employer tax withholding.**

*Guide to Doing Business in Loudoun County - Step 7*

For more information, visit the Virginia Department of Taxation website:

<http://www.tax.virginia.gov>

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